

LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE  
REPORT FORM

1. **COMMON AND SCIENTIFIC NAME:** Tropical Kingbird
2. **AGE, SEX, NUMBER, GENERAL PLUMAGE(S):** one
3. **LOCALITY:** Lumcon Rd., off LA 3090 (Fourchon Rd., A.O. Rapelet Rd.)  
**PARISH:** Lafourche
4. **DATE AND TIME OF OBSERVATION:** April 9, 2000, 9:20-9:40 a.m.; 4-4:10 p.m.
5. **REPORTING OBSERVER AND ADDRESS:**  
Robert D. Purrington, 4700 Bissonet Dr., Metairie, LA 70003
6. **OTHER OBSERVERS ACCOMPANYING REPORTER WHO IDENTIFIED THE BIRD(S):** none
7. **OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THE BIRD(S):**  
none
8. **LIGHT CONDITIONS (RELATIVE TO OBSERVER):** cloudless skies
9. **OPTICAL EQUIPMENT:** 10x42 Zeiss
10. **DISTANCE TO BIRD:** 20-100 ft
11. **DURATION OF OBSERVATION:** total of over 30 minutes at two separate times
12. **HABITAT:** Hercules-club trees and associated bushes (bacharis sp.?) at edge of salt marsh, ½ mile from gulf beach
13. **NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF OBSERVATION; BEHAVIOR:** the bird was feeding in the low trees and bushes along the edge of the marsh. It seemed to be in company with two E. Kingbirds, and it interacted aggressively with one on one occasion. I flushed the bird many times to get a good look at the tail, would occasionally lose it, then relocate it. It moved along about 100 yards of the low ridge.
14. **DESCRIPTION OF BIRD:** yellow-bellied kingbird with heavy black bill (much heavier than W. Kingbird, for example), heavily forked tail, black mask (through eye and auriculars), dark brown tail with no white on sides or tip. Throat and uppermost breast very pale, rest of the

underparts olive-yellow.

15. **VOCALIZATION(S), IF ANY:** at one point it interacted with an Eastern Kingbird, and gave about 2-3 seconds of vigorous strident twittering or chattering call notes, with no hint of a "queer" note or intonation, typical of Couch's. How definitive that is, considering that it was an aggressive encounter, I cannot say. No other vocalization. The bird did not respond to taped calls of either species when I played them in the afternoon, but it was very windy.

16. **SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW ELIMINATED:** Other yellow-bellied king birds: 1) Western eliminated by bill size, deeply forked tail (though Western can certainly show some forking, no white at all on sides of tail, very strong mask, pale throat, vocalization; 2). Cassin's eliminated by bill size, no hint of light tips to rectrices, deeply forked tail, vocalization; 3) Couch's by combination of vocalization, bill size, deeply forked tail; 4) White-throated Kingbird by size (?) and vocalization (?).

17. **RESOURCES USED IN IDENTIFICATION (FIELD GUIDES, ETC.):** none; National Geographic and Audubon Master guide consulted later; National Geographic tapes used at time and later.

18. **PHOTOGRAPHY, IF ANY (BY WHOM):** yes (RDP).

19. **PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIES:** Couch's twice in Louisiana, a couple of times in the Rio Grande Valley; Tropical several times in SE Arizona. Cassin's several times in SW. Western hundreds of times.

20. **ARE YOU SURE OF THE IDENTIFICATION?** I am sure of the Tropical/Couch's identification. As to the identification to species, I am about 85% certain. I wouldn't even try to make the ID without the vocalization, even though bill size, deep fork, mask suggest Tropical. The vocalization would seem to cinch Tropical and is consistent plumage characters, which are admittedly tricky. Perhaps the photos will tell.

20. **SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER AND DATE:** Dan Purrington; 4/25/00 (based on notes taken at the time)

